

Social Questions Bulletin

50

MARCH, 1960

Number 3

To End Methodist Structural Segregation

What should General Conference do about racial segregation? Constitution and organizational structure of Methodism? Commission to Study set up by the last General Conference proposed we keep our shameful segregated Negro jurisdiction. President Worley, in both this and the February *Bulletin*, sees the Study Commission's conservatism and offers an admittedly compromising alternative. The hard-hitting statement of the Student Council of the Methodist Drew School of Theology, published elsewhere in this issue, is also to the point and critical of the Study Commission's plan to keep the segregated Negro jurisdiction.

The California-Nevada Conference of The Methodist Church presented the General Conference two forthright memorials on this subject, adopted, as we recall, unanimously. The first put the principle and proposal in one pointed sentence: "We ask the 1960 General Conference to take all possible and necessary action to end racial segregation in the constitution and organizational structure of The Methodist Church." The second memorial spelled out in specifics the action General Conference could and should take to get rid of the Methodist structural segregation embodied in the Constitution and Discipline of The Methodist Church.

Submit to Methodist Annual Conferences a constitutional amendment deleting the one sentence in the Constitution (in Paragraph 26 of the Discipline) which provides a non-geographical, racial, "Central Jurisdiction."

Delete Sec. III in Chapter II of Part IX (Paragraphs 1766-83) from the Methodist Discipline.

Proposal 1. would abolish the segregated Negro jurisdiction embodied by the Methodist Constitution. That requires constitutional amendment by the necessarily slow vote of "two-thirds majority" at General Conference present and voting and a two-thirds majority of all the members of the several Annual Conferences present and voting (Constitution, Sec. III, Paragraph 10)."

Proposal 2. would do far more and can be effected by the General Conference alone—since the paragraphs to be deleted in that proposal are not in the Constitution. If the General Conference follows this proposal and deletes Paragraphs 1766-83 of the Discipline, it will thereby abolish the Discipline-provided, segregated, racial, Negro annual conferences in Methodist organizational structure. The Central or Negro Jurisdiction has been a symbol of Methodism's sin and shame of legalized racial segregation. In fact, however, by far most of the legalized structural-racial segregation in Methodism is not in the peripheral jurisdictional structure, but in the centrally important annual conference structure. Except for election of bishops (and that only when there are vacancies to be filled), no business of importance to the Church takes place at jurisdictional conferences; they only meet quadrennially; few attend; the Church could do without them and elect bishops, when necessary, at General Conference. The great business of the Church is in the annual conferences; they meet every year; they bring all ministers and representatives from every local church. Most legalized Methodist racial segregation is in the Discipline-provided structure of the annual conferences. It existed in the Methodist Episcopal Church (Northern) before the 1939 union; it was the sinful creation of northern Methodists and cannot be blamed on the South.

The Methodist Federation for Social Action, an unofficial membership organization, founded in 1907, seeks to deepen within the Church, the sense of social obligation and opportunity to study, from the Christian point of view, social problems and their solutions and to promote social action in the spirit of Jesus. The Federation stands for the complete abolition of war. The Federation rejects the method of the struggle for profit as the economic base for society and seeks to replace it with social-economic planning to develop a society without class or group discriminations and privileges. In seeking these objectives, the Federation does not commit its members to any specific program, but remains an inspirational and educational agency, proposing social changes by democratic decisions, not by violence.

We happen to be southern; but we yearn with all in MFSA to build a church and society which, at long last, follows Jesus in whom there is no bond or free, Jew or Greek, male or female—no room for unbrotherly discrimination or separation on grounds of class, race or nation, sex. The 1956 General Conference acted without compromise to end legal discrimination against women in the clergy of The Methodist Church. That is the kind of principled, uncompromising action which the 1960 General Conference can and should take on the race issue. The California-Nevada Annual Conference memorials point the way this can be done. We agree with those memorials and urge you to send similar ones if you too agree. Every Methodist individual or group has that right. (Memorials to General Conference should be sent in triplicate to: Leon T. Moore, Secretary of the General Conference, 1701 Arch St., Philadelphia 3, Pa.)

Those of us who want a truly Christian, inclusive, Methodist Church, free of legalized, structural unbrotherly racial separation, must not settle for return to the segregated status quo before the 1939 union. The pre-1939 status quo is not inclusive, not Christian, and not satisfactory. Abolition of the separate Negro jurisdiction is needed, but not nearly enough. The task is abolition of all legalized, structural Methodist racial separation: not only in the jurisdiction, but in the annual conferences. On the great social and moral issue of race, the world of inclusive baseball clubs, anti-segregation Supreme Courts, and stirring peoples who demand at long last equality—will not wait for or follow a Methodist Church which resolves safely and ignominiously to stand still (or more bravely, but not bravely enough, to go back to 1939).

The time for principled, uncompromising action to end all legalized Methodist structural racial segregation is not the nebulous, indefinite future when some kind of better "climate" has come. The time for that desperately needed, forthright, Gospel-

OFFICIAL NOTICE: MFSA 1960 NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Annual Meeting of The Methodist Federation for Social Action will be held in Denver, Colorado, immediately preceding the General Conference. Registration and organization 1:00 p. m. Monday, April 25, at the Central Y.M.C.A., 25 East 16th Avenue.

Keynote address to which the public is invited at Trinity Methodist Church at 4:00 p. m. Speaker, Dr. Donald O. Soper of West End Methodist Mission in London, Lyman Beecher Lecturer at Yale, 1960.

All other meetings Monday evening and all day Tuesday at the Central Y.M.C.A.

Our full-time Executive Secretary, Rev. Lee H. Ball will take over his responsibilities with this meeting. Please make every effort to be present. If you cannot come please send an extra contribution to headquarters to defray travel of Dr. Soper and to help on the expense of a fulltime Executive Secretary.

LOYD F. WORLEY, National President.

impelled action against Methodist legal segregation, is now, two months hence, in Denver, by the General Conference of 1960. No greater issue or responsibility faces that Conference.

"For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?" I Peter 4:17. —JRM.

General Conference Agenda

LOYD F. WORLEY

From where I stand it seems to me that the 1960 General Conference could if it would take favorable action on the following matters upon which the Methodist Federation has expressed concern:

1. "TAKE THE CENTRAL JURISDICTION OUT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH." This can be done by the compromise memorial which was discussed in the February 1960 issue of Social Questions Bulletin.
2. Provide a plan and a means whereby students and faculty of Methodist schools and colleges can have a term or a year's exchange between institutions of predominant Negro constituency and others. It can foster more exchange students in secondary schools after the manner of the successful plan of foreign-exchange students.
3. It can urge that all stable de facto governments of any nation making application be received into the membership of the United Nations and the "Parliament of the world." Misconceptions may be erased, oppression relieved plebiscites arranged and understanding achieved on a better basis than the present hypocritical "holier-than-thou" attitude.
4. It can continue to voice opposition to the demand for special favors for self-government sought from the state by sectarian groups and agencies.
5. It can urge the larger use of farm surplus products for the hungry areas of the world.
6. It can call attention to the misery and insecurity caused by the immigration and deportation features of the Walter-McCarran act and how it causes ill-will and loss of friendship in many parts of the world.
7. It can continue to oppose the beverage liquor traffic in urging individual abstinence and governmental prohibition of liquor advertising.
8. It can re-affirm its position on civil rights and religious liberty decrying those efforts to weaken public education of all children and to limit the judgments of the Supreme Court.
9. It can examine the policies of the Methodist Publishing House as to employment, working conditions, advertising, and disbursement of proceeds.
10. It can recognize the Methodist Federation by the insertion of the following paragraph in the 1960 Discipline as Paragraph 2033 or other properly numbered paragraph:
"The Methodist Federation for Social Action is an unofficial fellowship, organized as Methodist Federation for Social Service in 1907, authorized by the General Conference of 1908 to call attention of the church to the more important opinions expressed by the Federation."

Here are at least ten important actions which should be given attention by every delegate and the Church as a whole. The list is not all-inclusive, but mention is made of some matters which might otherwise be overlooked.

DEMOCRACY AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

By W. W. REID

There are certain "prices" that one must pay in order to achieve a relative degree of democracy in a so-called deliberative assembly. One of these is **time**: the true democratic process—letting each have his say and letting each make his contribution to the result—is time-consuming; the movements of a dictatorship are much faster. Another is **patience and tolerance**: hearing other fellow out; assessing his suggestion in the light of one's own experience. And a third "price" of true democracy is "freedom from points of order" that hamper, or curtail, or in the hands of one who may have something of value to offer the assembly.

Now I share with quite a number of observers convinced that the last General Conference of The Methodist Church was seriously—even dangerously—lacking in all these necessary attributes of a genuinely deliberative assembly. It seemed unwilling to pay the higher cost in time, in patience, and in listening with an open mind. Perhaps this is no peculiar criticism of the 1960 General Conference: it has probably been true of earlier conferences—with hundreds of men trained and ready to speak, with delegates eager to get home, and with too many things to consider in too-few hurried hours. Nor am I particularly complaining about most of the actions of the Conference: I am merely trying to assess and to preserve the democratic process. There are some delegates at home right now trying to explain just what was meant by some of the actions they voted.

We are told that the real work of the General Conference was done in the ten legislative committees and that each delegate was a member of one. That is true. But it also means that each committee report came from 10 per cent or less of the Conference, and that some committees had a preponderance of members who selected to serve on that particular committee because they had already arrived at conclusions for or against its major considerations. That is understandable, legal, and probably desirable. But it indicates why there should be ample provision for discussion and opportunity for discussion of the topic on the main floor of the Conference. For if discussion time is limited, or must compete for the chair's attention, or a "point of order" or a "previous question" motion interrupts or terminates debate, then the 90 per cent may be disenfranchised and their views unheard. . . . Indeed, I am one who feels that there were several important decisions made that would have probably been decided differently had there been ample time for free discussion. The pity is that the Church will have to live with these hasty decisions for four years.

It must be recognized, too, that some important reports came from groups other than the ten committees, had not had committee consideration, and that parliamentary motions prevented wide discussion of them. (Fifty percent of the delegates voted such for the first time, and many were unfamiliar with the involved parliamentary procedures). Indeed, I am willing to contend that the motion for "the previous question" is often undemocratic and discourteous to the house; especially when made following a humorous address which favors the mover's point of view. I regret, too, that there are differences in presiding officers, and one's ruling on procedures may unwittingly help determine a vote; and I am sure that consideration of 200 reports in one long half-day is not time enough for adequate discussion.

I would suggest four ideas for the consideration of making new rules for future General Conferences: (1) that adequate time be given for calm consideration by the total body of action which are to affect the Church's life for four years; (2) that for every question, the delegation from each annual conference be permitted to have one of its members present its point of view if it so desires (as done in UN debates); it will take time, you can't achieve democracy without it—nor through a parliamentary struggle; (3) the motion for "the previous question" should be done away with or sharply modified and many of the rules and procedures simplified; (4) there should be a trained parliamentarian (a secretary) beside the presiding officer, keeping him informed of "the parliamentary situation."

While working for world democracy, let's preserve it in the Church.

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METHODIST FEDERATION for SOCIAL ACTION

An unofficial fellowship founded in 1907.

President, Dr. Loyd F. Worley; Vice-Presidents, Rev. Frederick E. Ball, Rev. Arthur Crawford, Rev. Clarence T. R. Nelson, Rev. Elwin E. Wilson; Recording Secretaries, Mrs. Ella Mulkey, Miss Janice Roberts; Treasurer, Rev. Edward L. Peet.

Acting Executive Secretary, Rev. Lee H. Ball

Membership and West Coast Field Secretary, Rev. Mark A. Chamberlin

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STATEMENT OF STUDENT COUNCIL OF THE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, DREW UNIVERSITY, MADISON, N. J.

In these troubled times, the social problem of racial integration has become a focus of the ever-present judgment of the Word of God in Christ on the sinful disobedience of all men. As always, the Church must take its stand not on the whims of society nor on the trend of the times but on its true foundation in Jesus Christ.

The Commission to Study and Recommend Action Concerning the Jurisdictional System to the 1960 General Conference of the Methodist Church has recommended that the Conference undertake no basic change in the Central Jurisdiction." We, students of the Theological School of Drew University protest this recommendation. The report of the Commission acknowledges that the abolition of the Central Jurisdiction does not call in question the basic geographic jurisdictional structure of the Church. The Commission chooses to base its recommendations on the principles of Methodist Unity and Social Expediency as a denomination rather than the principles grounded in the Biblical tradition of the Church. The Commission recommends maintaining the existence of the Central Jurisdiction even though the racial segregation maintained in and by the Church through "morally and spiritually at odds with the tenets of Methodism."

Both this recommendation and the principles which support it are inconsistent with the message of the Christian faith and sound theological reasoning. The divine imperative of the Christian faith is not to be subordinated to the principle of social expediency.

In this acute social crisis, the Church must exercise its responsibility and leadership by taking concrete action symbolic of faith in Christ as its sole foundation. The Church must pre-empt any visible action as a witness to the absolute demand of the Gospel. Since the existence of the Central Jurisdiction has become a symbol of racial prejudice, we urgently favor the taking of immediate steps by the 1960 General Conference of the Methodist Church toward the dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction and any other structures within the Church which contribute to racial and ethnic segregation.

Approved and adopted by the Student Council
in Special session, January 20, 1960.

REPORT FROM THE ACTING EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

December 14 I went to Concord, New Hampshire, with two New York clergy from New York Conference, to attend the Willard Uphaus hearing. MFSA President Loyd Worley led a protest, drawing from the New Testament how we should obey God rather than men, reading from the Bill of Rights, leading in the Lord's Prayer. About forty clergymen, Episcopalians, Methodists from New York and New York East Conference, stood on the court steps joining in the protest, prior to the beginning of the hearing. About two hundred sympathizers of Willard Uphaus overtook the hearing room, filled the down stairs lobby, where sang Martin Luther's "A Mighty Fortress . . ." Still Louis Brandeis, the Attorney General of New Hampshire, has the effrontery to say Willard Uphaus' religious motivation is hypocrisy, and only pretense!

January 31 the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee and Religious Freedom Committee, joined in a rally in New York City protesting subpoenaing of several youth by the Un-American Activities Committee to a Washington hearing February 3, because they attended World Youth Festivals for Peace, in Vienna and elsewhere. I spoke, representing the Religious Freedom Committee of the MFSA; said the RFFC had called for the abolition of the Un-American Activities Committee for the six years of its existence, and the MFSA had called for the abolition of this committee for as long as this committee had been in existence. Four hundred youth attended. Three bus loads of youth planned

to go from New York to Washington to visit Congressmen and picket the hearing. The American Civil Liberties Union is providing free counsel for the young people subpoenaed. The Committee for First Amendment Defendants joined in the rally.

MFSA President Loyd F. Worley announced his intention of traveling from Hartford, Connecticut, to Concord, New Hampshire, every third Wednesday of the month for as long as Willard Uphaus is in prison, to make a Silent Prayerful Witness for a half-hour at noon on that day on the steps of the New Hampshire State Capitol, to visit Willard in the jail at Boscawen, and to visit state authorities in Willard's behalf. He has invited 125 Congregational clergymen in New Hampshire, as many as will, to join him in his prayer vigil.

The Religious Freedom Committee, 118 East 28th Street, New York 16, N. Y., announces publication of a 32-page booklet, "Abolish Congressional Inquisition". It is the history of the violations of religious freedom by the mistreatment of the MFSA. It is full of invaluable material. Send for copies at 25 cents each.

Lee H. Ball.

CUBAN REPORT

(From a Missionary Friend of MFSA Pres. Worley)

This year, it will be possible again to hold an "international evangelistic crusade" in Cuba, with American ministers coming down to preach in all our churches the first week in December. Of course, we are looking forward to their help in our work—and also to their going home convinced that a great deal of what they read in the U. S. press is very far from the truth. Naturally, we all believe that the Christian church has something for the people that government does not have and cannot have. But we also feel that it is a serious mistake not to recognize that this government is helping thousands of previously neglected people find what certainly is a more abundant life. The New Testament tells us repeatedly that Jesus looked upon the multitudes and had compassion upon them. This government really is doing the same thing, bringing healing and hygiene to the people who have never known either, offering education to the illiterate and ignorant (many of the barracks of Cuba, including some of the largest ones, are being converted into schools), and honesty in government to a nation which has never had it before. Its program may not please some business interests here or in the U.S.A., but if people are more important than profits then certainly there is far more that a Christian must approve than deplore in this government.

Let me close this letter by translating a statement, dated July 15, 1959, of the Cuban Council of Evangelical Churches, which I think expresses the convictions and the feelings of almost all the Protestant Christians of Cuba:

"The Cuban Council of Evangelical Churches feels highly pleased because of the religious liberty which since the first of January of this year, the date on which the Cuban Revolution triumphed, the quarter million of Protestants who live in our fatherland enjoy. It also applauds and indorses the effort which the Revolutionary Government is realizing, attempting to implant in the life of the nation the Christian principles of liberty, equality and brotherhood to which all men, without distinction of culture, race, social and religious position have a right as children of God. We sincerely regret that because of misunderstandings or impulsive acts of some North American and Cuban demagogues, the good relations which have always existed between the United States and Cuba appear somewhat tarnished for the moment. We ask God that patience, humility and good will may prevail, now more than ever, so that these two peoples, traditionally friends, may continue to strengthen the bonds of friendship, cordiality and democracy. We reject, for not conforming to the truth, any imputation that may be made situating the present Revolutionary Government in the orbit of Communism. This revolution, in being entirely Cuban and by its democratic character, repudiates totalitarianism, of the right or of the left. We pray that the peace and the tranquility which the people of Cuba enjoy in the present moments may be maintained and preserved for the welfare of our fatherland of all the people of the world."

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

For several months headlines have been calling attention to startling stories about conditions of our collective morality. They began with the big swindle in fixed TV Quiz programs. The companion story of "payola" is still continuing before a Congressional Committee. This term means bribery, the money paid secretly to the directors of musical programs on the air to boost the work of newcomers in that field. The indirect form of it—presents and paid hotel bills—cost the President the loss of the services of his chief executive assistant Sherman Adams. The morning paper tells of the big record companies picking up the hotel bills of the annual convention of Disc Jockeys at Miami Beach to the extent of over \$100,000. A journalism school professor says that the receipt of presents designated to influence the news, or comment on it, is to be found in the newspaper world.

There have appeared shocking accounts of municipal corruption in the two biggest cities of the nation. In New York, where the Tweed Ring began the sordid record of big graft in our municipalities by stealing 45 millions from the city treasury between 1869 and '71, two reporters uncovered such a story of collusion between a section of the police and the underworld, and the preying of gangs of human vultures upon small business and unfortunate slum dwellers, that the *Nation* gave it an entire edition under the title "The Shame of a City". This is the city where some fifty years ago Jacob Riis shocked the comfortable middle class who had social conscience with his *How the Other Half Lives*. Today a top housing official, driven to see how greedy landlords crowd families with children into one room in rat infested houses with inadequate sanitation, exclaims "I had no idea human beings had to live like this". Slums in New York and other cities show the lack of human values in our economic system and the inadequacy of our social welfare and religion.

Driven to action by this lifting of the lid on the mess of corruption the administration started a series of snap investigations. As soon as one scandal dropped out of the headlines another got in: A deal in a low income section of the city between inspectors and retail meat dealers to fleece the purchaser by false weights. By similar collusion in another section a million dollar take from the consumers was accomplished by mixing air from an empty truck tank with the oil being delivered. In still another section some real estate agents combined in a devious scheme to get a cut of Federal Housing Funds for small homes by padding builder costs, and in one case for houses that were never started. An unfinished chapter in this unfinished story begins with the indictment of a top city administrator for taking what he insists was a loan to improve his apartment from a contractor friend who was a bidder on big city projects.

In Chicago policemen were in partnership with burglars. Investigation produced so many resignations and transfers that some citizens became scared the center was without adequate protection and began to talk about law enforcement aid from the Governor.

In Chicago, at the turn of the century, the famous muckraking campaign exposing municipal corruption by a group of brilliant writers, Lincoln Steffens leading, went across the land in the most popular national magazines. It got started by the Hearst press bringing over the famous British journalist, William T. Stead, under the title "If Christ Came to Chicago." Those were the days of the "robber barons" out to get control of land, timber, minerals, oil and railroads, with bribed politicians as their retainers. In the cities they wanted street car franchises and control of growing public utilities. The Teapot Dome Scandal was the end of the era. Our present gangster corruption, with its cut to part of the police and inspectors got its start in the days of prohibition. From World Wars I and II it got its tactics of violence and its major weapons.

I know of no study that can tell us whether the total amount taken out of the pool of production today by the gangsters, grafters and bribers is greater in proportion to the increase of population than the take by similar forces fifty years ago. But it seems apparent that this anti-moral parasitic mode of living is being

practiced today on more levels of income.

To get this outline sketch of one aspect of our collective morality complete we have to put into the background the juvenile delinquency, vandalism and the "rumbles" of youth gangs with deadly weapons, in suburbs as well as slums. Then on the side there have to be filled in some smaller contributory items: The padding of expense accounts and cost-plus contracts for war preparations. The fixing of prize fights and other athletic contests. The ignoring of violations of some rules in basketball and football by referees on the ground that they are too busy to cover everything. Then in the college world the extent of cheating in exams, and the degree to which careers are being chosen on the basis of prospective income.

These symptoms indicate serious decline in our moral health increased since so far there is no attempt to discover the root cause as followed the muckraking of the early nineteen hundred. Scott Nearing, then professor of economics in Pennsylvania University published a study dividing national income, section by section, into two parts—earned and unearned. The technical consequences of unearned increment was discussed by some other economists, and its moral nature and consequences by some preachers. R. H. Tawney, the English scholar who later wrote the standard *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, published *The Sick Soul of the Acquisitive Society*. Here this became just *The Acquisitive Society*. It was not until the Great Depression nearly bankrupted the nation in the next decade that there was general admission of something radically wrong with a system which subordinates social wellbeing to money making.

Our masthead statement about the economic order is a product of that period. It needs now to be analysed and expounded in terms of the situation that now confronts us, both internationally and nationally.

One important part of that job is to make clear the relationship between the struggle for profit and the breakdown in the health of our body politic. The common link is the getting of something for nothing whether it is the getting credit in college for work not done or the right to collect from the labor of others by multiplying pieces of paper without giving them a full equivalent. In due turn each helps produce the other. The appropriation of unearned increment by the lawful operations of high finance has the same moral flaw as the procedures of the grafter, and the gangster with his legal partners, increased in the latter case by the use of violence.

This situation in capitalistic industrialism adds to the confirmation history has given the saying of the Galilean carpenter concerning the conduct of both persons and nations: "ye cannot serve both God and Mammon."

H.F.W.

"The government of Fidel Castro is broadly based and has as its keynote a sweeping program of political reform, economic nationalism and social revolution . . . The opposition to Castro in Cuba comes from Batista's group, dissatisfied business men and persons affected by the drastic reform laws, but it has little popular backing."—From "U.S.-Latin American Relations," prepared for Senate Foreign Relations Committee by Univ. of New Mexico School of Inter-American Affairs.

HELP FREE WILLARD UPHAUS!

Our beloved, honored friend and fellow-MFSAer, Willard Uphaus, went to County Jail (Box 9), Boscawen, N. H., before Christmas. He refused to violate his conscience and the Biblical mandate not to fear false witness. He would not aid the Supreme Court condemned process of "exposure for exposure's sake," give names of innocents to a witch-hunting N. H. Attorney General for harassment and harm. Willard is a faithful Christian, not a criminal. WRITE TODAY TO JUDGE GEORGE GRANT, JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF MERRIMACK COUNTY, CONCORD, N. H. HE HAS THE POWER TO RELEASE WILLARD UPHAUS FROM JAIL. URGE HIM TO DO SO.